244 and for that reason yams, especially the air tuber yam, are frequently planted with ngon. In general, the only edible part of the yam is the rhizome, and in the case of the air tuber yams, only the air tubers which all fall off at the same time when they are ripe. This has given rise to a symbolic custom practiced when the children eat yams. [189] For instance, when the three sons of one mother eat yams, the first nudges the second, and the latter nudges the third, as a sign that they wish to die after one another, as is natural, and not all on the same day, like the air tubers.

Considerably less can be said of the third group than of the first and second groups. The chief plant belonging to it is cassava or manioc, Manihot utilissima Pohl (mbún I). The times for /Fig. 54 appears here in the original text/ the cultivation of cassava are as follows:

Fig. 54. Cassava Shoot.

• [190] vúgán esób = long dry season (December to February), felling the trees on the farm;

ló gó esób = short rainy season (March to May), planting the shoots;

ofún = the rainy half of the year.

In the following esób, in other words, from January of the following year on, that is, seven months after transplanting, harvesting may begin, and it may extend over an arbitrary period of time since the plant is a perennial.

[189] There are no medicines for the growth of cassava as there are for the groundnut and ngon. The prayer of the Pangwe -- an ancient one in new guise -- would be: "Dear God, let the groundnut and ngon flourish, cassava grows by itself!" Cassava has comparatively few enemies; only goats and sheep like to eat the leaves. There is a species of grasshopper (mbáásán III) which descends in

133 full of fish, hold water during the worst of the dry season.

137 In going up the Ogooué one meets, a little before the island of Talagouga, the first spurs of the north-south oriented African plateau, still low (N'Djolé has an altitude of 63 meters), the elevation of which increases rapidly as one goes towards the interior. Upstream from N'Djolé, the Ogooué ceases to be navigable. Broken by rapids, it is no longer passable except for specially equipped dugout canoes. About a dozen kilometers beyond the influx of the Okano, the aspect of the country changes: the large forest gives way to great stretches of prairie dotted with wooded groves, on the hillsides formations of quartz blocks are seen and oil palms, which were not present downstream, begin to appear. Mt. Otoumbi dominates the landscape from its 700 meters, and the rounded hillsides of the ranges bordering the river recall some features of the Voiges.

133 In the N'Djolé region, the Ogooué receives as its chief tributaries: to the right, the Bingola, Okano, and Abanga; to the left, shorter rivers of less volume, the Leledi, Lebe, and Mbumi. Only Abanga is navigable, and this for only about 70 kilometers.

D2 133 The climate is hot and humid, with alternating dry and rainy seasons: from October to January, the rainy season; from January to March, a very hot, dry season, the ripening time of almost all the forest fruits; from March to June, again violent rains, great tornadoes, and severe heat; and from June to October, a comparatively cool, dry season, with cessation of growth for some varieties of forest vegetation. At this time the waters are very low; sand banks can be seen everywhere in the Ogooué some of whose tributaries, like the Misanga, have only a trickle of water. The seasons are obviously not as strictly demarcated as this, and one season often encroaches on the other.

101 563 Today this whole region is almost entirely inhabited by the Fan who, since their arrival, probably at the beginning of the nineteenth century, have either driven out or decimated the [other] inhabitants, the Okata and Bapinji [Bapindji] up the N'Djolé (of the Okata there is now only one village left, and the Bapinji have completely disappeared) and the Bakele [Bakale, Bakelle (?)] downstream. The latter still have some villages in the interior on the left bank, but only one on the edge of the river.

101 Fan is the name they give themselves. Pahouin [Pahuin] is the one by which they are commonly known and which, according to Haug (1)

1. Ernest Haug, "Notice géographique et ethnographique sur le Bas-Ogooué"

6:Alexandre and Binet--1 G-5 (1946-1954) 1958 FH9 Fang FH9

/1/

Chapter 1

Geographical Location and Climate

[3] The Pahouin country covers about 180,000 square kilometers, from the middle Sanaga (4° 30' N) to the mouth of the Ogooué (1° 20' S) in latitude, from the Atlantic (9° 30' E) to the middle Sanga (14° E) in longitude. The inhabitants are politically under the jurisdiction of the Cameroons, Spanish Guinea, and French Equatorial Africa (Gabon and Middle Congo).

[33] The country appears essentially as a plateau of rocks, crystalline in the north, metamorphic in the south, with somewhat worn, intrusive domes, separated from the sea by a worn mountain range of rarely more than 1,000 meters cut by the gorges of coastal rivers. The mean altitude varies from 500 to 700 meters up to the deep fault of the lower Ogooué Valley.

The watershed between the Congo and the coastal river basins bends toward the southeast from the Nkolomendim (the mountain-of-the-waters) massif in the Sangmélima subdivision. The principal tributary of the Congo, by way of the Sanga, is the Dja (N'Goko). The principal coastal rivers are the Sanaga and the Nyong, the N'Tem (Campo), the Muni, and the Ogooué.

[32, 105] The climate is of the humid equatorial type, modified by the altitude and characterized by a double alternation of dry and rainy seasons. The time measure of the Pahouin is the mbu, about six lunar cycles (ngon), and the solar year is divided as follows: (1)

1. The dates are approximately valid for the Cameroons-Gabon border. The terms are in Boulou; in Fang they would be: oyum, sugha, or sughé.

mid-June to mid-December: ôyôn (little dry season) and su'u (great rainy season)

mid-December to mid-June: ésep (great dry season) sometimes characterized by bikone (small rains)

Mean temperatures and rainfall are indicated on the table on page 3.

Mean Temperatures and Rainfall

Stations (1)	Coordinates (2)		I		II		III		IV		V		VI	
	Latitude	Longitude	T (3)	R (3)	T	R	T	R	T	R	T	R	T	R
Yaoundé ...	3°52' N	11°32' E	24.1	35	24.5	44	24.4	122	24.1	173	23.8	182	23.1	129
Ebolowa....	2°54' N	11°10' E	24.5	50	24.5	63	24.7	154	24.8	200	24.4	212	24.1	149
Oyem	1°45' N	11°41' E		75		94		189		202/		210		129
N'Djolé....	0°11' S	10°45' E		81		138		225		194		215		46
Lambaréné .	0°42' S	10°13' E	26.6	136	26.7	197	27.1	268	27.5	193	26.6	180	24.6	16
Libreville ..	0°25' S	09°27' E	27.0	206	27.3	291	27.4	264	27.3	395	27.0	244	25.8	40

Stations (1)	VII		VIII		IX		X		XI		XII		Total Annual Rainfall (4)	Temperature Extremes (5) Maxima		Minima	
	T	R	T (3)	R (3)	T	R	T	R	T	R	T	R		Months	Degrees	Months	Degrees
Yaoundé ..	22.3	37	22.4	97	22.8	206	23.0	283	23.5	119	23.8	11	1 138	Feb.	29.6	Aug.	18.6
Ebolowa ...	23.1	47	23.0	70	23.5	186	23.6	272	24.1	175	24.4	61	1 639	April	30.9	Oct.	18.2
Oyem		41		76		194		338		194		101	1 843				
N'Djolé....		3		6		63		334		271		133	1 709				
Lambaréné .	23.3	2	23.7	5	25.2	75	25.9	363	26.0	404	26.2	142	1 981	April	32.2	July	19.7
Libreville ..	24.7	1	25.2	11	25.9	106	26.4	359	26.5	416	26.9	260	2 593	March	31.4	July	21.6

/3/

(1) Names of stations.
(2) Geographical co-ordinates of the stations.
(3) T: mean monthly temperature in degrees (general mean for the last 10 years). R: mean monthly rainfall in millimeters (general mean for the last 10 years).
(4) Total annual rainfall in millimeters, 1946-1955.
(5) Temperature extremes: maxima and minima during the year (mean for the last 10 years, months and degrees) (Oyem and N'Djolé, have only pluviometric posts).

/4/ Chapter 2

Ethnological and Historical Position

1. Nomenclature

The term "Pahouin" is undoubtedly incorrect, but it is convenient. There exists in fact no African designation applicable to the whole of the group of peoples studied here. Some writers (Martrou, Trilles...) prefer to speak of the Fang or Fan group, which has the drawback of creating a confusion with the tribes properly called Fang, which constitute but a fraction of this group. That is why, along with Largeau, Tessmann, Madame Dugast, and others, I prefer to speak of the Pahouin.

It should be observed that this term, long taken amiss by the Africans, in recent years tends to be adopted by them in connection with the political regrouping of tribes, for the very reason that it does not give prominence to any one of them. Thus the Mitzic Conference in 1947, bringing together the Fang, Boulou /Bulu/, Ntoumou /Ntum/, Mvaé, and Fong, took the name Pahouin Conference, Ntoumou, Boulou, Mvaé, and Fong declining to be lumped together under the designation "Fang."

Even the origin of the word "Pahouin" is debatable. The most plausible hypothesis is that of Father Trilles, who derives it from m-faⁿ (radical faⁿ plus the singular classifier m/be) by way of Pongoué /Mpongwe/, which changes the F to P and is averse to ending